6: Thomson K-3 (1883-1884) 1887
FL12 Masai FL12

776 In connection with the decided belief of the Masai in a God, it may be noted that they have also some minor deity called Neiterkob—apparently, as far as I could learn, an [754] earth spirit. They have faith in witchcraft, though the efficacy of the lybon, or medicine-man, lies not in any innate ability of his own, but in his power of intercession with Ngăi, who works through him, and imparts magical virtues to various objects. Their conception of the Deity seems to be marvellously vague. I was Ngăi. My lamp was Ngăi. Ngăi was in the steaming holes. His house was in the eternal snows of Kilimanjaro. In fact, whatever struck them as [782] strange or incomprehensible, that they at once assumed had some connection with Ngăi. Their prayers to him were incessant. Nothing could be done without hours of howling, whether it was to seek direction where to slaughter their 824 enemies, or to ward off a disease. The most sacred thing among 778 them is the grass. Held in the hand, or tied in a sprig to the dress, it is a sign of welcome and peace. Thrown at any one, or into some mysterious place, it is an invocation for a blessing on the person, or a propitiatory offering. Next to the 712 grass comes the milk. No liberties may be taken with it. 778 The milk must be drawn into calabashes specially reserved for its reception, into which water is not allowed to enter—*cleanliness* being ensured by woodashes. To boil it is a heinous offence, and would be accounted a sufficient reason for massacring a caravan. It is believed that the cattle would [231] cease to give milk. The cows, it may be remarked, are never milked except in the dark.

835 Moran found married life sadly dull after his warrior experiences, and to kill time he accompanied one or two war-parties. But that was exceptional. His time henceforward was chiefly occupied in eternal and interminable discussions on the most trivial questions, or wandering long distances on visits to his friends, while his wife stayed at home to milk the cattle, or occasionally made journeys to neighbouring hostile tribes to buy grain. She, however, was in her element when a caravan came round, and then she enjoyed the double pleasure of an intrigue and a lovely present of iron wire and beads.

595 In time Moran's first wife became old and ugly, and he took to himself a second—the former being stripped of all her iron wire for the purpose of decking the new comer. At last the 764 day closed for both of them, and one after the other, they formed the subject of horrible hyænas' laughter. These fierce

12: Fox G-5 (1925-1930) 1930 FL12 Masai FL12
Kenya

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warriors may have sexual relations with initiated women. This is regarded as being the first stage in a warrior becoming an elder.

The warriors have their heads shaved—usually by their mothers—at the close of the *E-Unoto* ceremony, but they allow the hair to grow again, and plait it into a pig-tail when long enough. [302]

Milk Drinking by Warriors.—A warrior may not drink milk unless it is handed him by another of his age-group. They must therefore always go about in parties of two or more. The procedure on arrival at a village where they want some milk is as follows :— 561 574 272

The warriors enter the village and stand in the open space within the circle of the huts till one or more of the old men comes to greet them. They ask for a hut of their age-group, or, failing that, a hut of an elder of their *Ol Piron*. On being shown a hut to enter they go in and sit down on a bed or the stool, and wait till milk is handed to one of them (for description of hut *see* p. 463 ff.) He shakes up the milk, removes the cap of the gourd, and hands it to his companion, who drinks it. If only one gourd is brought they share it, handing it from one to the other. If a second gourd is brought the warrior to whom the first gourd was originally handed may open it and drink it himself provided that he has given the first gourd to his companion. Belching after a drink of milk is a sign of repletion and is good manners, showing the guest's appreciation of the hospitality of his host.

Ol-Ng'esher of Milk.—This ceremony is performed by each warrior individually. He is given milk by an elder in his mother's hut, and drinks it by himself. He shaves his head and does not grow a pigtail again. Thereafter he may drink milk by himself. He usually marries very soon after this ceremony, and is no more regarded as a warrior after it. The ceremony usually takes place nowadays a year or two after the *E-Unoto* owing to Government policy of reducing the period of warriorhood as much as possible. In the Purko, most of the *Il-Salasah* have already performed their milk *Ol-Ng'esher*, although there is as yet no left-hand age-group for their generation. 561 [272] [302] [148] [177]

I have heard it said that in some tribes there is a ceremony of handing over warriorhood from one generation to a junior one. Among the Masai there was no such ceremony. When the young warriors of a new generation became strong enough they fought and defeated the old ones, taking on the warriorhood by force.

Meat Feasts.—No man may eat meat which has been touched by an initiated woman until he has performed the second *Ol-Ng'esher* ceremony, called the *Ol-Ng'esher of meat*. After that he may eat meat which a woman has touched if he likes. The Il Meruturut and Il Kitoip age-groups of the Purko were said to be going to have their meat *Ol-Ng'esher* in June, 1930; but I left Africa before it was due, and therefore cannot describe the ceremony. [249]

A man of the generation immediately older than the warriors must not be seen eating or drinking milk by a warrior until one of the warrior age has given him a heifer.

/32 cont./

512 [462] [351] [252] When the livestock have been driven out of the kraal to pasture, the women and children start to clean it. Then the fire is lighted in the huts and on it are placed the pots filled with water in which the vegetables are to be cooked. These pots (e modi, 'modio) are [415] [439] not made by the Masai themselves, but are bought from sedentary tribes or also from the Wandoróbo, who presumably learned the potter's art from them. They are a foot high and globular. In con- 262 [241] trast to the warriors, all the occupants of the family kraal, espe- cially since the cattle epidemics, eat vegetable food which they buy from the neighboring peoples, since they themselves do not 262 engage in any agriculture at all. Their favorite foods, however, • 272 are, of course, milk, meat, and blood. Milk is always drunk by [158] healthy people uncooked, as fresh (eṅ gule) or sour (eṅ gule naoto); boiled milk is food for the sick and as such is usually mixed with pulverized grains of ol lodoa (Maesa lanceolata). Sheep milk is especially popular because of its very high fat content. Blood of cattle, sheep, and goats is drunk fresh or eaten in the clotted [158] state. Milk mixed with fresh or /33/ cooked blood (en jiwŏt) is greatly appreciated; this drink is highly esteemed as invalid soup [234] for the wounded. Cheese making is unknown. Butter is made by [252] agitating the cream in a large gourd-bottle (en diagolgol). Fat, [263] rendered in a pot, is used as an ingredient in other foods, especially meat broth, but is also drunk without any admixture. Meat is prepared without adding salt; it is cooked either with various spices or roasted on a stick at the open fire. One does not eat in [252] one day cooked meat and milk /Ill. 13 appears here/ together [153] [263] (1).

[171]

1. This was also forbidden for the Hebrews, according to the 2nd Book of Moses 23, 19-34, 26, passages which are part of the so-called Yahwist documents, that is, the oldest sources of the Pentateuch.

because the latter together with the ol mokotan spice (bark of

/33 cont./

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C. G. Schillings phot.

Ill. 13. Women cleaning the kraal.

262 Albizzia anthelmintica) always used in the cooking of meat is
• 272 supposed to cause severe diarrhea. Therefore milk that is offered
[153] is often refused in the hope that a meal of meat will be obtained
[263] on the same day. One who wishes to partake of both foods in one day -- and where is there a Masai who could resist an invitation to a meal of meat?! -- vomits first before eating the meat, for which he produces the necessary stimulus by means of a blade of grass stuck in the throat. If one has eaten cooked meat today, then /34/ one first drinks some blood in the morning before the milk, not out of considerations of health, but rather because it is believed that the livestock would give less milk as a consequence of neglecting this custom. Bringing milk into contact with meat [231] is most scrupulously avoided, because, according to the general view, through that the udder of the cow from whom that milk came would become permanently diseased. For this reason the

/34 cont./

262 Masai only most reluctantly and infrequently sell cow's milk, for
• 272 the buyer indeed could in the above-mentioned manner make their
cows sick with it. The Masai scorn any kind of game meat, as
[136] well as birds and even fish, of the latter of which species of Barbus, Chromis, Clarias, and the sheatfish-like Synodontis occur almost everywhere in larger brooks.

252 The preparation of the principal vegetables is the following:
262 batatas (ol muruṅgu, el muruṅguni -- Ipomoea batatas) are cooked
263 in water with a little steppe salt (e munjáṅ), then drained, mashed with a whisk (ol gibere, el giberen), and stirred with fresh milk. The finished dish is called el muruṅguni. Unripe bananas (ol marigôl, el marigo -- Musa paradisiaca) are peeled, cut up, and cooked in water with salt. After they have been drained, a little butter (eṅ gorno) is added. Unripe dried bananas (ol kitâuo, el kitâuón) are cooked in water, drained, and then stirred with milk and butter. Maize kernels (ol bâlegi, el bâleg) are cooked in water without the addition of salt. Beans are cooked with salt. One distinguishes ol bombôl -- el bombo (Dolichos lablab), eṅ giú --eṅ giñ (with which both Cajanus indicus and Vigna sinensis are designated), furthermore os sigoriôl -- es sigorio (Phaseolus vulgaris), ol gámuri -- el gámuri (Phaseolus radiatus). Eleusine coracana (en dabá -- 'n dabán, or en drigá -- 'n drigán or also called eṅ guruma -- 'n gurumaṅ) and Sorghum vulgare (ol birirí -- el birirín) are cooked to a thick porridge and lightly salted. Dioscorea abessynica (ol geré -- el gerén) and Colocasia antiquorum (which the Masai on Kilimandscharo designate with the Dschagga /Chagga/ word maduma) are cooked in salted water.

Honey (en aischo -- 'n aischi) is eaten unmixed and is also
276 used as an addition to various medicaments. They buy tobacco
[439] (ol gumbâu, Nicotiana rustica), which the Masai consume in quantities, from sedentary Negroes, who put it on the market in loose, bast-wrapped packets (Fig. 4) of various sizes or in the shape of solid balls about five centimeters in diameter.
[415] For the preparation of this, the tobacco leaves, picked ripe, are tightly packed, tied up with

Fig. 4

[Warrior Kraal]

512 /89 cont./

701 Life in the kraal begins at sunrise, when the mothers and the
462 girls start milking the livestock. Not until around seven o'clock,
[233] when the boys drive the livestock to pasture, do the warriors get up
[234] to take the first meal (en dal̈ e dadegenja = food in the morning),
[264] consisting of fresh milk. Then the women apply themselves to the
[272]
[262]

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Ill. 33. Dance in the warrior kraal II.

512 cleaning of the cattle stalls and other work, as well as to start the
701 cooking of their food, consisting of purchased vegetables. This is
462 eaten around two o'clock in the afternoon (en dal̈ e kat' aré, that
[262] is, the second meal), while them the warriors at the same time
[264] drink the rest of the morning milk, which has already become
[272] somewhat sour (efig ule naisedjo = slightly sour milk). After that
512 the old women take a nap or busy themselves with sewing and making
535 ornaments, while the warriors along with the girls /90/ amuse
701 themselves with dance and song (os silgólio) under a nearby shade
tree. For this a row of warriors stands opposite a row of girls. The
former dance in place by slightly lifting the feet and bending the

[Warrior Kraal]

/90 cont./

512 535 701 [836] [832] [533] knees. The row of girls moves forward up to the warriors with short, stamping steps, bending their knees and swaying their upper bodies. As a rule the dance ends when each girl whose lover is absent approaches one of the dancing warriors in short high-jumps. This is an invitation to a rendezvous, which the one concerned answers in similar fashion as a sign of consent. The dance is always accompanied by singing. Shortly before sunset all return to the kraal.

701 535

Ill. 34. Dance in the warrior kraal III. $\frac{1}{A}$

512 701 [234] [264] [272] [535] 512 534 Soon afterwards the livestock returns home, and, after it is milked, the people take the evening meal (*en dai e tiba* = food in the evening), again consisting of milk. After that the dancing of warriors and girls begins anew on a small open place in the kraal, close to the entrance, and is interrupted only from time to time in order to moisten with milk the throats shouted dry. During this time the mothers are still busy with the livestock. It takes quite a while

1, A [Illustrations 34 and 38 (on p. 119), despite the differences in captions, apparently were both taken at the same location, with only a slight time differential--Analyst]

/173 cont./

233 [561] [857] Small livestock and donkeys are tended by little boys, cattle by older boys, under the supervision of a few old men. Dogs are no longer used for this now; rather the livestock heeds the whistle or call of the herdsmen. To what extent this is the case is best demonstrated when Masai flee with herds of livestock. A number of men, shouting and whistling, run before and behind the herd, which rages across the steppe in a mad chase. In former times the herdsmen quite generally used dogs. The dogs did not serve so much to keep the herd together, but more for guarding. They announce the approach of predatory animals by barking or by hastening to the herdsmen.

[231] [978]

231 [862] [972] /174/ As has already been mentioned above, fresh livestock blood alone or mixed with milk forms a food prized as quite particularly nourishing. The blood for this is drawn off the living cattle and goats in the following manner: A strap is tied around the animal's neck in such a way that the blood returning to the heart in the large vein is blocked by it and breathing is not affected. Then a man shoots an arrow (Fig. 8) with a bulb-shaped, thick tip (ol horet), from which projects a scale-shaped sharp piece of sheet iron six to eight millimeters long and equally wide, into the swollen vein, whereupon the blood squirts out in a stream and is caught in a gourd bottle (ol bugut). The bleeding is stopped by a simple untying of the strap after the operation is finished. From a strong bull or ox approximately four to five liters of blood are drawn at one time, from a cow only half as much, and this is repeated every month. No blood is drawn from good milch cows and cows with young calves. Blood is drawn from sheep by means of an incision in the depression above the eyes or between the eye and the middle of the forehead. The slaughtering of cattle is done by a stab in the neck after the front and hind legs have been fettered; goats and sheep are suffocated by having their mouths and noses held shut. Cows are never slaughtered, not even when they are too old to be used for breeding.

[411] [915]

231 242 561 Livestock that has died is eaten. As soon as the animal is dead, one removes the skin from the neck, severs the neck veins, and catches the blood flowing out in the skin. The cutting up of a head of cattle is done with the greatest care; almost every single muscle is carved

/209 cont./

796 782 [842] [539] In the songs the following prayer is constantly repeated: 'Ng ai stasaia, 'j' oschiage aomon, kiamon ag' ije kiamon eñ gera, eñ golobi en aischo, i.e., God, I implore you always; I pray, we pray to you alone, we pray for children, for birth for the barren woman.

Whereas the supplication feasts are usually held on the es sobiaĩn days (from the 18th to the 20th of the month), a joint supplication-prayer, ol dogóm, often takes place on the day of the new moon. The people of the kraal gather in the evening and, from a buffalo or cattle horn, drink a mixture consisting of milk, a cold extract of eñ gaitetojai twigs (Commelina Merkeri K. Sch.), and a white powder obtained from the ol oiboni, while they say the /210/ prayer: 'Ng ai jo ijok eñ gischon, jo ijok ñ gischu, jo ijok eñ gera! That is, may God give us well-being, livestock, and children. If a larger supplication feast is to be held in a month, the joint supplication feast always precedes it on the first day of the month.

[272] [237] [415] [824] [539]

782 783 [784] If a small child of one not long detached from the warrior standing dies, he not infrequently sees in it a punishment from God for his having killed a pregnant woman on an earlier expedition, provided that he once killed a woman who might have been in this condition. In order to obtain forgiveness, he offers God a black gravid sheep, and, to be sure, close to the spot where at that time he committed the deed. Before he kills the animal, he prays to God, mentions the purpose of the sacrifice, and asks for pardon. As penance for his misdeed, he throws the blood and amniotic fluid (eñ gepa) of the sacrificial animal, as well as the fetus and uterus, both cut into pieces, upon the spot where it occurred. He takes along neither meat nor skin of the slaughtered animal, but leaves everything lying there when, after the concluded sacrifice, he returns to his kraal.

825 826 775 613 The lineage of the El kiboron believes that the bones of the buried corpses of their married men turn into snakes. They therefore do not kill these animals, like the other Masai, but are happy about their presence in the kraal and by the huts and, as soon as a snake appears, set on the ground a shallow dish with milk and honey as food for it. Snakes in and near El kiboron kraals are not rare.

/373 cont./

824 411. ol osidja gutok (Asystasia gangetica [L.] T. Amd.). One washes young goats and sheep with an extract of the crushed plant to get rid of fleas.

/374/ 412. ol osigiria l en djoi. If a cow has fever, one ties a twig on its tail, with which it then whips its body. The milk of such a cow is drunk by pregnant women, since it is believed that through that the child expected will not be susceptible to fever.

413. e' rano 'l ogunja (Pentanisca uranogyne S. Moore). Fodder for small livestock.

414. o' rarait (Cissus rotundifolia [Forsk.] Vahl). The leaves are placed on wounds as a plaster. A root decoction mixed with bull-meat broth is drunk for muscular rheumatism.

415. o' remit (Salvadora persica L.). The pieces of twig chewed to resemble a brush are used as toothbrushes. A paste of powdered root takes the place of our mustard plaster. A decoction from about five finger-sized pieces of root to be drunk is regarded as a cure for gonorrhea and cystic catarrh.

416. e' rikaru (Andropogon papillosus Hochst.) is a good fodder grass (1).

1. On the southern end of Lake Natron a Panicum species was also called e' rikaru.

417. o' rikaru (Cynodon dactylon Pers.) is a good fodder grass.

418. o' riroi, also called o' riroi l om bE (2)

2. Eulophia Shupangae Krzl. was also called this.

(Gladiolus nov. spec.). The juice obtained by chewing the bulb serves as glue to fasten the feathering on the arrow.

419. o' ropande (Commiphora spec.). The extract or decoction of a piece of bark the size of two or three hand-palms, mixed with meat broth, is taken as a remedy for abdominal pains. Since its effect is considerably milder than that of similar remedies, it is preferred by pregnant women.

234 hair styles. The gourds are grown by nearby cultivators
415 and purchased or traded by the Masai. The calabashes
[264] are cleaned between usings by washing in water (if available) and then purified with a mixture of urine and wood ash. After being carried in one of these containers the milk has a rather characteristic somewhat smoky-sweet taste that may stay with several days.

443 The maize meal is purchased or traded from the dukas or trading post cum general stores which are found at Narok, Loliondo, and at other points around the periphery of the area.

262
• 272 Meat comes from the Masai livestock and occasionally game. The old traditions laid down specified rules for who in the tribe might eat what kind of meat, and at
[701] what times. Apparently the warriors had a right to demand milk and sometimes meat from anyone, at least in their section. Milk and meat were not to be consumed on the same day, but blood could be mixed with the milk.

701 When not fighting the warriors could carry out
[562] an olpul, or meat camp. They would take goats or a bullock and make camp in the bush, kill and eat the animals. The olpul might take from a week to a month,
[826] depending on the available time and meat. We presume that

562 eat meat from wildebeests and gazelles. When I shot an elephant near one boma the Masai women turned out in [252] force. They spent most of the day cutting off strips of [462] subcutaneous fat and some flesh. A few elders joined [825] the women in the cutting. Several Masai requested fat from a lion I had shot (which had been raiding their boma), but they said that their use was for medicine rather than food. We have records, therefore, of Masai eating (or taking to eat) wildebeest, Grant's gazelle, Thomson's gazelle, elephant, buffalo, eland, and kongoni.

Cattle are usually eaten when they die. Cows are rarely slaughtered, although bullocks sometimes are killed for food and prize ones are killed and eaten [562] by men at ceremonies. We have watched women picking up the remains after livestock have been slaughtered, and Millais (1920) spoke of Masai women eating offal and other remains of oxen or sheep after the men were through eating.

231 Bleeding of cows and sheep is accomplished by
• 272 tying a thong about the animal's neck so the jugular swells, then shooting a partially blocked arrow into the jugular vein and catching the spurting blood in a gourd.

19: Talbot E-4,5 (1956-1962)1964 FL12 Masai FL12

231/272 When they have enough blood, the thong is released and the small wound covered with mud or dung, and the animal runs off apparently none the worse for wear. The blood is drunk warm, or mixed with milk.

146 Although they are thin, the Masai appear adequately nourished, and they have great physical endurance. The Ministry of Health doctors told us that Masailand was the only part of East Africa in their experience where the children did not show signs of Kwashiorkor or the other diseases of malnutrition that are so common with Africans. Gale (1960) noted that the greatest defect in the diet of the East Africans is lack of animal protein, but this is true of the Masai only in times of extreme drought.

291 [304] Clothing, Jewelry and Grooming. The traditional clothing of Masai men and women is an ochre colored cloth of cloth usually gathered over one shoulder. Some wear skins, usually of sheep. A cow hide is used for a rain coat. (292) Most Masai men wear sandals made from heavy leather or old rubber automobile tires. Very little else is worn by either Masai men or women, except near missions where the women occasionally wear more concealing clothes.